Government of Saskatchewan

Annual Report

Saskatchewan Social Services

2001 - 2002

Letters of Transmittal

102-07015/

The Honourable Lynda Haverstock,
Lieutenant Governor,
Province of Saskatchewan

May it please Your Honour:

I respectfully submit the Annual Report of the Department of Social Services for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2002.

Sincerely,

Glenn Hagel,
Minister of Social Services

The Honourable Glenn Hagel
Minister of Social Services

Dear Sir:

I have the honour of submitting the Annual Report of the Department of Social Services for the year ending March 31, 2002.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Durnford,
Deputy Minister

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Introduction

The Department of Social Services is dedicated to helping Saskatchewan's most vulnerable residents participate more fully in the economic and social lives of their communities. Our focus is on providing the supports people need to understand their strengths and apply them to becoming independent, contributing members of our society. Our work, therefore, touches all aspects of family and community life — from income support for the working poor to keeping children safe in their homes. We are committed to researching and implementing the best practices in social policy, and to continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of our work.

On March 26, 2002, a major reorganization of government departments took place, leading to significant changes for the Department of Social Services. Some of the implications of this reorganization are discussed in the "Future Challenges and Opportunities" section of this Annual Report. All other information in the Report refers to the configuration of the Department prior to the reorganization.

Mandate

The Department's mandate is to:

- Assist vulnerable families to care for and support their members;
- Provide basic income support for children, families and individuals, and work with others to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty;
- Protect children from abuse and neglect and assist people facing family violence through prevention, education, and facilitating substitute or alternative care or shelter;
- Promote a standard quality of child day care, and support parents in achieving a balance between family and other responsibilities;
- Promote a balance of responsibility and meeting needs in youth, and provide programs for those in conflict with the law;
- Support independent, community-based care for persons with mental and physical disabilities;

- Work across sectors within communities to help them identify, own and respond to the social needs of their members; and,
- Take leadership within and outside government to achieve this mandate.

Core Business Areas

Program Divisions

The Department is organized into three major program divisions: Income Security, Community Living, and Family and Youth Services. Each division provides expertise and program coordination in a number of areas that are key to the achievement of the Department's strategic plan. Divisions are also responsible for certain centralized services, policy direction and support to the regional offices.

Income Security

Provides basic income support for children, families and individuals to reduce the risks and disadvantages caused by poverty; provides services and supports, including the funding and administration of child day care programs, to enhance independence through employment and other measures; supports communities in developing services which contribute to the social and economic well-being of low-income families and individuals.

Community Living

Provides programs and services for persons with intellectual disabilities and their families. Over the past two decades, the Division has tried to move as many people with intellectual disabilities as possible out of institutions and into the community, with the appropriate supports. Supports include case management, therapy support, family support and community-based services. The Division delivers programs and services primarily through an extensive system of community-based social, residential, vocational and early childhood agencies.

Family and Youth Services

Provides targeted support to at-risk families and youth to prevent further family breakdown, as well as child welfare services to protect children from harm and provide children in the Department's care with appropriate residential and personal services. The Division also provides community support programs and custody programs for young offenders. All of the Division's programs promote or preserve a healthy, functioning family unit, often in the face of multiple social issues including poverty, alcohol and drug abuse, and violence.

Regional Delivery Network

Although a number of functions, such as the Department's Call Centre, are centralized, the majority of the Department's programs are delivered locally through our regional offices. This regional approach ensures that services are provided in a manner that is sensitive to the needs of communities. Regional head offices are located in Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, North Battleford, Yorkton and Swift Current. (*See map on the following page*).

Office of Disability Issues

The Office of Disability Issues has a unique role to play within the department, and across government. Established in 1998, the Office of Disability Issues serves as a focal point for provincial government initiatives on disability policy and performs a co-ordinating role throughout government in addressing disability issues and policies. The Office is hosted by the Department of Social Services and reports directly to the Deputy Minister of Social Services.

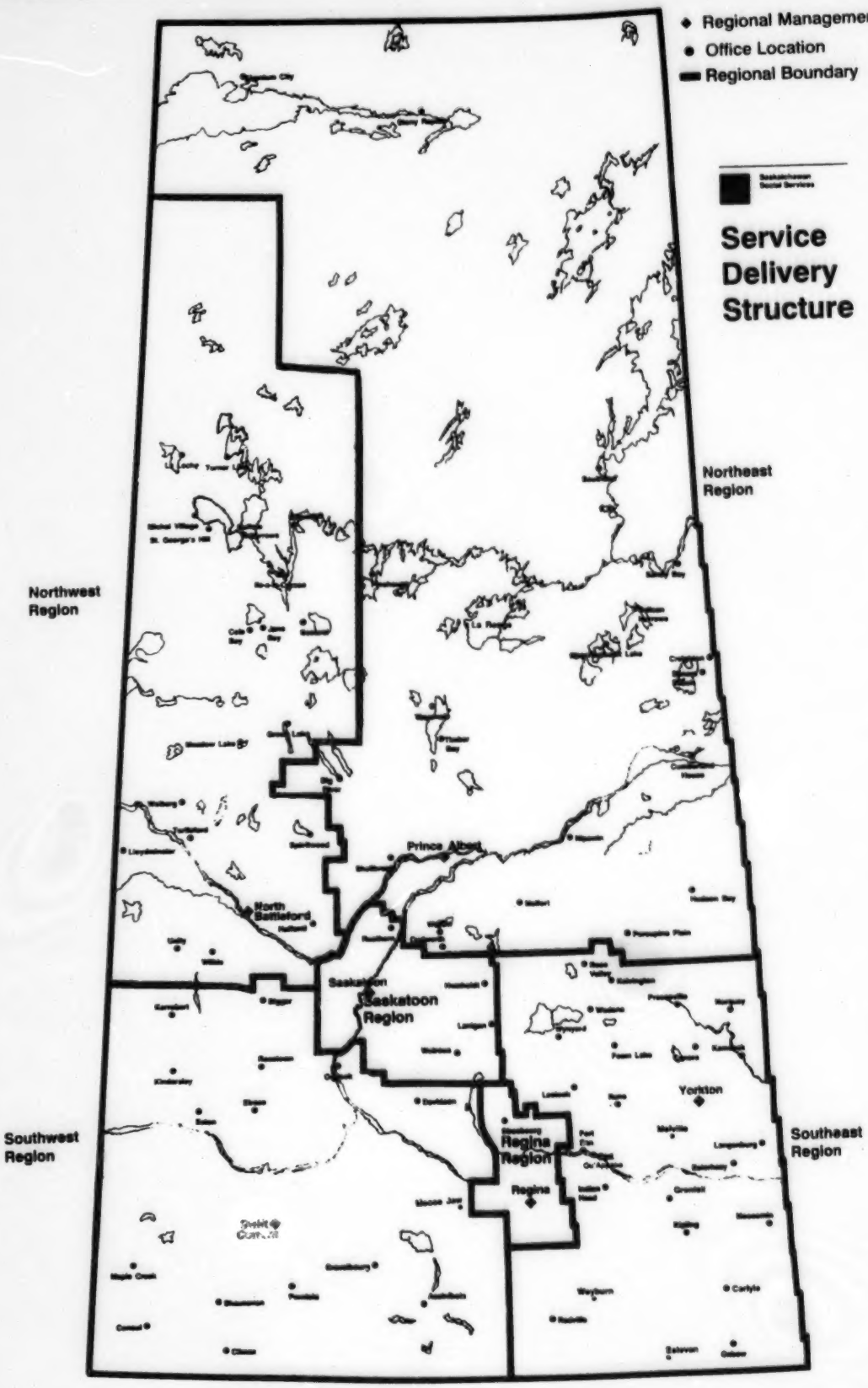
Community Development Unit

The Community Development Unit was established in 1996 to provide training, leadership, planning and support in community development to the Department and Saskatchewan communities. Following consultation with community stakeholders, the Unit was dissolved in December, 2001, and its functions absorbed into Social Services regional head offices.

Support Services

Central and regional operations are assisted in carrying out the Department's mandate by the following support divisions, branches and units:

- Financial Management Services
- Research and Evaluation
- Strategic Policy
- Technology and Property Management Services
- Organizational Development
- Communications and Public Education
- Intergovernmental Relations


Regional Management Centre
Office Location
Regional Boundary
Service Delivery Structure
Northeast Region
Northwest Region
Prince Albert
North Battleford
Saskatoon
Saskatoon Region
Regina Region
Regina
Yorkton
Southwest Region
Southeast Region

Strategic Directions

Social programs in Saskatchewan, as elsewhere, have traditionally focused on responding to crisis situations. In recent years, however, Saskatchewan has taken a lead role in reforming social policy, with a new emphasis on long-term solutions that provide new hope for citizens whose circumstances have limited their access to the economic and social resources they need to care for themselves and their families. This new approach supports individuals and families in their efforts to become economically independent, and recognizes that healthy families and communities are the building blocks of a healthy society.

The work of the Department is anchored by our vision for a society in which:

> *Saskatchewan people in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances have opportunities as citizens to be included, to contribute, and to participate equitably in the social, economic and cultural life of the province.*

The Department of Social Services cannot achieve this vision on its own. Strong partnerships with other government departments, other levels of government, First Nations and Métis people, employers, communities and community organizations, and the clients we serve are vital to our progress.

Our overall strategic direction was developed through consultation with many of these partners. We believe this consultative approach provides a strong foundation on which we can build the future we all desire. The Department is firmly committed to leading the province towards that positive future by working with families, communities and others to achieve our common objectives.

Based on research, consultation, and past experience, the Department has outlined three goals to guide our work in the years ahead:

- People in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances improve their economic and social well-being;
- People in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances are included and supported in their families and communities; and,
- Effective policy, programs, services and systems support citizenship and inclusion of disadvantaged people.

Even as we collaborate with our partners to achieve these goals, we realize that many trends and issues are beyond our control, and others will take many years and multiple resources to address. The following section outlines some of the key factors that will affect the work of the department as we move forward with our plans.

Our Vision

Saskatchewan people in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances have opportunities as citizens to be included, to contribute, and to participate equitably in the social, economic and cultural life of the province.

Trends and Issues

Economic trends

Poverty

Poverty is a significant factor in many of the social problems of concern to the Department. The cycle of poverty is often multi-generational. For example, growing up in a welfare family is a strong predictor of adult dependency. If this cycle is broken, the incidence and severity of social problems will decline.

Household income and expenses

Individual or family income is a key indicator of disadvantage. Certain segments of Saskatchewan's population have seen significant improvement in this respect:

- Two-parent household incomes have increased by seven per cent since 1993;
- Female single-parent household incomes have increased 24 per cent in the same period;
- The total number of people reporting earned income increased six per cent between 1992 and 1998; and,
- The number of families with children living in poverty has declined significantly.

Despite this progress, household incomes in Saskatchewan have not kept pace with the cost of living, and income growth remains well below the national average. In addition, poverty among Saskatchewan's Aboriginal population, particularly among registered Indians living off-reserve, remains widespread. Saskatchewan's Building Independence initiative, which began in 1997, has shown positive results in helping people move from social assistance to the workforce. Further income security initiatives will assist more families and individuals in improving their economic circumstances.

Unemployment

Success in obtaining jobs for social assistance recipients is influenced strongly by unemployment levels in the economy. In general, an increase in the number of unemployed in Saskatchewan will result in an increase in the social assistance caseload. Unemployment rose slightly in 2001; however, much of the increase was confined to the agricultural sector. Strong job growth in non-agricultural industries in recent years permitted the social assistance caseload to continue to decline in 2001.

The Canadian economy experienced periods of recession in the late 1970's, mid-1980's, and early 1990's. Periods of recession, with accompanying high unemployment levels, are typically followed by significant increases in the social assistance caseload. While caseloads decline during the post-recession recoveries, they do not usually return to their pre-recession levels.

Regardless of economic cycles, there are segments of the population that tend to have higher unemployment levels than the average population. These include single parents, youth (ages 18-29), Aboriginal persons, and persons with disabilities.

Social and demographic trends

Education

Education level is a key factor which may affect both an individual's ability to find employment and his or her expected income. As of March 2002, about 74 per cent of social assistance cases were headed by persons with less than grade 12. In contrast, among Saskatchewan's total labour force, 20.5 per cent have less than grade 12. *(Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey, 2001)*

Single-parent families

Saskatchewan's social assistance caseloads include a large number of single-parent families. Single parents also dominate the caseloads of other programs, such as child protection. Faced with higher childcare and other costs, many single parents find it challenging to support their families and keep them functioning well on a single income.

Persons with disabilities

In Saskatchewan, about 10 per cent of working-age people have moderate-to-severe disabilities. Many people who rely on social assistance have an identifiable disability, and many children in care would also be considered by most standards to have physical or intellectual disabilities and/or

chronic illnesses. People with disabilities represent an under-utilized human resource and face greater barriers to fuller participation in society and the economy. People with disabilities can enhance their quality of life through fuller participation, but often require community and employment supports for this to occur.

Aboriginal people

Saskatchewan's population includes a relatively large proportion of Aboriginal people. Although Aboriginal communities are making rapid progress in education and social development, Aboriginal people are still under-represented in the workforce, and over-represented in social assistance and child welfare and young offender programs.

Essential partnerships

Government partnerships

Opportunities in education and training, employment, health care, and other areas are key to building independence, but are largely outside the Department's jurisdiction. Working with other government departments and agencies and other levels of government is, therefore, critical to ensuring that disadvantaged people have access to the supports they require to become part of the mainstream.

Provincially, departments responsible for health and education play important roles in providing basic services to disadvantaged people. The Department also interacts with the federal government on key joint initiatives, such as the National Child Benefit (NCB), the National Children's Agenda (NCA), Benefits and Services for Persons with Disabilities ("In Unison"), Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (EAPD) and the Early Childhood Development (ECD) initiative. Work is also done to maximize federal reimbursement for First Nations children who are in the care of the Minister of Social Services. Continued federal contributions to Canada's social programs are vital if we are to make progress towards our goals.

Community partnerships

The Department also relies on partnerships with an extensive network of community-based organizations to help provide services. In 2001-02, more than 275 organizations were fully or partially funded by the Department, with total funding of about $75 million or about 13 per cent of total Department expenditures. The Department is working to develop even stronger and more co-ordinated resources in communities across the province to help achieve its goals.

Human resource challenges

The Department is in the midst of change. Redesign of Saskatchewan's income support system means that staff roles and responsibilities, the demand for skills, and the way we use technology will continue to change. The Department is also faced with an aging workforce, which will require significant staff recruitment over the next 10 years. As we plan for the future, we are guided by our commitment to develop a representative, diverse workforce.

Year in Review

The Department of Social Services has made significant progress on redesigning income security programs through Saskatchewan's internationally recognized Building Independence strategy. This strategy, launched in 1997 and 1998, includes a number of programs to assist low-income families in the care of their children, and to encourage and support their decisions to work. By supplementing the income of low-income working families and providing health and other benefits outside the welfare system, the Department has contributed to a steady decline in the number of Saskatchewan families relying on social assistance. At March 31, 2002, the Social Assistance Plan (SAP) caseload was less than 32,000 compared to more than 40,000 in 1994-95. Service delivery changes implemented in 2001-02, along with enhanced benefits, ensure that this progress will continue.

The Department has also made progress in redesigning child welfare services in the province. In response to the April 2000 Children and Youth in Care Review, published by the Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office, the Department has pressed forward on changes to its policies, practices and procedures. As well, the Department continued to work with the Department of Justice and the federal government towards implementation of the Youth Services Model in young offender programming. While much remains to be done, our work in areas such as child assessment and development, kinship care and interventions for high-risk violent youth demonstrates our strong commitment to ensuring the safety and well being of children and youth in care.

Social policy is the responsibility of both the federal and the provincial/territorial governments, and the leadership of Saskatchewan Social Services has ensured that social issues remain a priority at the national level. During 2001-02, as the Provincial-Territorial co-chair of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services forum, our Department continued to provide leadership on initiatives in Early Childhood Development, the National Child Benefit, and the Employability Assistance for Persons with Disabilities cost-sharing agreement. Over the past few years, the Department has made a significant contribution to the national social policy reform process. Since 1998, this work has resulted in a major policy changes and significant new federal investment in social programs that benefit Saskatchewan people.

Within the province, too, the Department has provided both leadership and collaboration to ensure the most effective use of social programming dollars. Saskatchewan's major early childhood development initiative – KidsFirst – and the School^{PLUS} model in which school becomes the heart of the community, are two examples of interdepartmental, inter-sectoral approaches in which the Department has played a significant role.

Our Goals

Goal 1: People in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances improve their economic and social well-being.

Goal 2: People in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances are included and supported in their families and communities.

Goal 3: Effective policy, programs, services and systems support citizenship and inclusion of people in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances.

Goal 1: People in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances improve their economic and social well-being.

The Department's activities are guided by the belief that, for most people, a job is the best route out of poverty. This principle informs our work in helping people access the supports and opportunities needed to become full participants in the economic life of the province.

Quality of life is closely tied to the ability to contribute to, and benefit from, full participation in society. Young people, people with disabilities, First Nations and Métis people, single parents and many others may face particular challenges in this respect. Addressing these challenges is key to a sustainable strategy to reduce poverty, support inclusion and promote citizenship over the long-term.

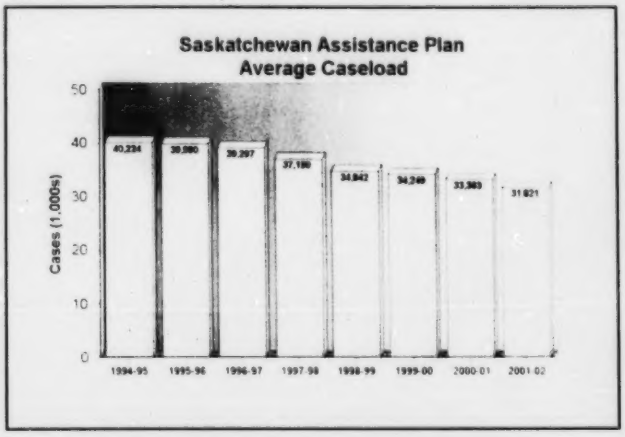
Increasing independence over the long-term cannot be accomplished, however, without attention to the immediate needs of individuals and families. Our approach is designed to build individual, family and community capacity to meet those needs over time. The Department therefore, continues to focus on structural reforms to the welfare system, helping people become work-ready and building partnerships across the social and economic spectrum to help disadvantaged and marginalized people to become independent.

Increasing Labour Market Attachment

Building Independence

The Department continues to be a major player in developing and delivering Saskatchewan's internationally recognized Building Independence programs. The Building Independence initiative addresses the issues that make it difficult for some families to leave welfare and find work. Under the initiative, the Department of Social Services is responsible for the Saskatchewan Child Benefit (SCB), the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement (SES) and redesign of service delivery to support new directions and programs.

As a result of Building Independence and strong job growth in non-agricultural sectors, the SAP caseload has continued to decline. In 2001-02, an average of 31,821 cases (individuals and families) received benefits under SAP. This represents a decrease of more than 8,400 cases from the 1994-95 average. The number of individuals living in households receiving welfare has declined by almost 30 per cent in this time period, and the number of children in households receiving welfare has declined by 34 per cent.



Saskatchewan Child Benefit

Introduced on July 1, 1998, the SCB provides a monthly allowance to assist low-income families with the cost of raising children. SCB-eligible families who do not have other supplementary health coverage are entitled to receive Family Health Benefits, administered by Saskatchewan Health. These programs assist low-income working families to remain in the workforce, and reduce the barriers for parents moving from social assistance to work.

The SCB was introduced as a transitional program to simulate benefit levels that would eventually be achieved when the federal National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) was fully mature. As the federal NCBS is increased in July of each year, amounts paid to families through SCB decrease by a corresponding amount.

In 2001-02, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit was being paid to an average of 29,022 Saskatchewan families with 58,000 children. Approximately 70 per cent were single parents. The average monthly SCB payment was $74 per family. The number of families receiving the SCB and the average cost per family are decreasing each year as the federal investment increases.

Saskatchewan Employment Supplement

Also introduced on July 1, 1998, SES provides a monthly supplement to wages, child and/or spousal maintenance payments, and self-employment earnings of low-income parents. The program supports a parent's decision to work by assisting with the child-related costs of going to work.

The Saskatchewan Employment Supplement is administered from a central Call Centre located in Regina. The Call Centre features extended hours of operation, including weekends. In 2001-02, Call Centre staff answered more than 117,700 calls.

In 2001-02, the Department implemented a number of changes to SES to provide greater support to families with young children and to extend benefits to a broader range of families. These changes include:

- Introduction of a supplementary benefit for families with children under the age of 13. The maximum supplementary benefit ranges from $46.25 to $83.25 per month, depending upon the number of children under 13 in the family;
- An increase in maximum benefits of between $10 and $18 per month, depending upon the number of children under 18 in the family;
- Extending maximum benefits to families with slightly higher incomes by increasing the income point at which benefits begin to be reduced from $1,075 to $1,115 per month;
- Providing partial benefits to families with higher incomes by increasing the range of income eligibility by $220 to $329 per month, depending upon the number of children in the family; and,
- Implementing a minimum benefit amount of $25 per month.

In conjunction with the Departments of Finance and Agriculture and Food, as well as the Farm Stress Line, the Farm Debt Review Board, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and other agencies, the Department conducted a review of the method used for assessing farm and self-employment income. Subsequently, two changes were made to allow more families with low gross business and/or farm income to qualify for SES:

- SES benefits are now based on the previous year's gross income as reported to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency; and,
- The amount of the SES benefit is now determined by applying the rate that provides the greatest benefit to the family.

The SES program helps low-income working families remain independent, and keeps many families off the welfare rolls. In 2001-02, the Department conducted a public awareness campaign to further increase enrolment in the program. This campaign resulted in first-time applications from more than 800 Saskatchewan families. On average, more than 7,500 Saskatchewan families received monthly SES benefits in 2001-02, an increase of 15 per cent from the previous year.

Service delivery changes

In early 2001, the Department introduced a new service delivery model for the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan. This model, piloted in Yorkton and Regina throughout 2001-02, includes Call Centre access to services, connections to jobs through the Jobs First initiative, a First Step orientation to social assistance and Transition Planning services for longer-term clients. Expansion of this model to other major centres began in January 2002.

Under this new model, the Regina-based Call Centre is the first point of access for new social assistance applicants. Staff provide information about community resources and government programs that may allow the applicant to remain independent, assess eligibility for social assistance and evaluate the applicant's ability to participate in the labour market. This service has expedited client access to information and services required.

Applicants assessed as job-ready are referred to a new initiative called Jobs First. This service provides potential social assistance clients with access to employment as a first choice before becoming involved in the welfare system. Approximately 40 per cent of those who participated in Jobs First sessions found employment. In the pilot areas, social assistance intakes were reduced by 25 - 30 per cent.

Planning for work

In 2001-02, the Department also introduced a case management approach called the Transition Planning Model to be integrated within the re-designed service delivery model. This new approach to practice is solution-focused, strength-based and client-centered. It effectively and efficiently supports persons applying for and receiving social assistance benefits to build their capacity towards maximum self-sufficiency and full participation in the labour market.

Child day care

Access to suitable childcare arrangements is a critical support that helps parents enter and remain in the labour force. The Department is responsible for the delivery and regulation of licensed childcare in the province, as well as the administration of childcare subsidies for low-income parents.

As the Department moves forward on increasing labour market attachment, the availability of childcare for low-income families will become increasingly important. In March 2001, the Department commissioned a survey of Saskatchewan households with children under the age of 13 to identify:

- Current childcare arrangements used by Saskatchewan families;
- Parental preferences and needs for childcare;
- Issues that cause particular difficulties for managing work and childcare; and,
- Opinions about the role of government in meeting those needs.

The results of the survey, received in December 2001, will be helpful in shaping the Department's response to childcare needs in the years ahead.

The total number of licensed spaces in Saskatchewan has remained relatively constant in recent years. Slightly more than five per cent of children under 12 years of age with working mothers are accommodated by licensed childcare services. In 2001-02, however, the Department was able to address increased demand for group family childcare home services by licensing 159 new spaces in 15 new facilities — an increase of 70 per cent in this category.

The licensed childcare sector is particularly important to working families whose children have special needs. The Department of Social Services works to address those needs through a variety of mechanisms. In 2001-02, the Department:

- Increased the Early Childhood Services Grant by $110 to $680 per month per staff, as required by Regulations;
- Increased the annual Family Child Care Equipment and Programming Grant by $25, bringing the grant to $100 per licensed space;
- Provided funding to 285 licensed childcare homes to replace children's equipment and supplies, access professional development opportunities and ensure developmentally appropriate children's activities;
- Distributed its quarterly newsletter *Partnerships for Inclusion* to all licensed homes and centres; and,
- Through the Community Solutions Program, funded 14 innovative projects designed to meet specific needs in 11 communities.

In addition to these efforts, the pilot inclusion (block) funding approach was continued in four centres with relatively high numbers of children with special needs. Inclusion funding allows these centres to deliver services to all of their children, without focusing on the deficits of individual children. Each of these centres participated in the Early Childhood Education Rating Scale (ECERS) in the Spring of 2001, and again in Spring of 2002. Results of the

2002 ECERS show that, compared to initial ECERS scores, all four centres:

- Made positive changes in physical layout, programming and staffing;
- Reduced time spent on administration and increased time spent with the children; and,
- Met the needs of a greater number of children and families.

Supported employment for people with disabilities

The Department works closely with communities across the province to support individuals with disabilities to participate in the workforce. This work includes on-the-job training, job coaching, job maintenance and productivity support, all provided in partnership with employers.

In 2001-02, the Department worked in partnership with the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres and its member agencies to support the entry of 120 individuals with intellectual disabilities to the Saskatchewan workforce. The Department also provided financial assistance to the Supported Employment Transition Initiative, Deer Park Villa in Ituna and other initiatives over the course of the year. Through these efforts, a total of nearly 270 individuals were successfully supported in employment.

Reducing demand for last-resort programs and services

Saskatchewan Income Plan

The Saskatchewan Income Plan (SIP) provides an income supplement to low-income seniors, helping to reduce the depth and incidence of poverty among seniors. Among Canadian provinces, Saskatchewan has the highest percentage of seniors, but one of the lowest rates of poverty among the elderly.

As other sources of income for seniors, such as the Canada Pension Plan and other pension benefits have become more commonly accessed, the number of persons receiving benefits under the program has declined. In 2001-02, an average of 13,996 low-income seniors received benefits from SIP each month, representing an average of $720 per individual over the course of the year. As well, in February 2002, the Saskatchewan Income Plan Regulations were repealed to extend SIP benefits to same-sex common-law couples.

Child welfare redesign

An important part of welfare reform is building the capacity of families and communities to care for children in difficult circumstances.

Three fundamental principles on Child Welfare redesign are:

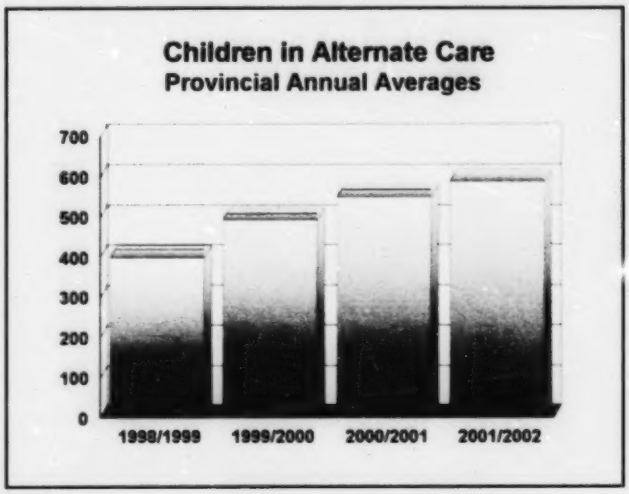
- Family is the primary influence in the growth and development of children. Our greatest investment needs to be in supporting families;
- Government's role as parent is fulfilled by a focus on permanence and independence for children and youth as well as providing high quality care and service; and,
- Community involvement and shared ownership is required in every aspect of program design and service delivery.

In 2001-02, the Department continued its reform of the child welfare system to improve the likelihood that children at risk can be cared for effectively in their own homes and communities. This new approach includes family-centred case management; the development of new, culturally appropriate child placements, such as kinship care; community involvement in decision making and development; and supports for high-risk youth to attain independence and employment.

We recognize that the challenges many families face are generational in nature, and that there are no short-term solutions. Our focus must therefore be on improving outcomes for children who are receiving services now, while we work through other means to address broader issues such as poverty and family violence.

Kinship Care

Development of Kinship Care is a major component of the Department's Child Welfare Redesign. The Department has gradually increased extended family placements but considerable policy and program development work is required. A major consultation attended by more than 80 key stakeholders was held October 2001 with major presentations by the Child Welfare League of America and First Nations Elders. The consultation provided the Department with an opportunity to provide information and gather feedback regarding key considerations for development of a kinship care program. It was confirmed that when children need to be placed out of home for safety, extended family should be the first consideration. The consultation also provided insight into the types of supports required by relative caregivers.



Caregiver training

The Department evaluated the current caregiver training and determined that it needed to be replaced to better reflect the goals and objectives of child welfare redesign and meet the needs of children in care and their caregivers. This included research on a variety of training approaches, and a major consultation attended by more than 90 stakeholders. The Department has initiated a review of the PRIDE program and the Extending Our Families Through Unity program for the basis off a new training approach.

Youth justice and re-integration

Saskatchewan's approach to youth justice recognizes the need to balance public safety with the needs of young offenders. Research shows that incarceration, in and of itself, does little to ensure effective rehabilitation of young offenders, and successful reintegration into society. A new approach is needed, one that responds to community values and public safety and improves the ability of young people to make positive choices about their futures.

The new Youth Services Model (YSM), which is moving from the pilot phase to full implementation, is designed to hold young people accountable for their behaviour in meaningful ways. YSM puts a sharper focus on identifying and addressing the risk factors young offenders face, such as lack of employment, education, and family and community support. This approach is based on solid research into best practices in youth justice, and will be implemented within the context of the new, federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

The Department has a long and successful history of partnering with community-based organizations to offer alternative ways of holding young offenders accountable while reducing reliance on the formal youth justice system. The Department contracts with 12 community-based organizations to provide alternative measures options for youth. The Department also contracts with 18 agencies to provide various forms of day programming designed to provide youth with the skills and supports needed to reduce the likelihood they will come into further contact with the justice system.

In the Prince Albert region, the Youth Employment Support Program provides employment readiness and residential support services for youth prior to their release from custody.

Through this program, youth are placed in jobs six to eight weeks prior to their release, following an assessment of their skills, strengths, cognitive ability and preferences. They move into conventional residential resources one to two weeks prior to release. An Employment Coordinator continues to be a resource to these young people for up to one year following their discharge to the community.

Since its establishment in 1999, 42 young people have taken part in the Employment Support Program. As of March 31, 2002, nine of these individuals were employed or due to leave custody with the support of the program.

In 2001-02, the Department entered into partnerships with the Battlefords Tribal Council and the Yorkton Tribal Council to provide reintegration services to First Nations youth upon their release from custody. Referrals to the service are made by community youth workers while the youth is in custody. A reintegration worker works with the youth, his or her family and the community to assist in planning for the youth's release.

In order to establish and maintain partnerships and discuss common issues, Central Office staff, along with representatives from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and First Nations Child and Family Services agencies meet twice yearly. Topics for discussion have included Child Welfare redesign, kinship care, and issues related to young offenders.

The North Battleford School Retrieval Program, funded jointly by the Departments of Social Services, Health and Education, addresses the need within the North Battleford area for educational options for youth serving young offender dispositions. As a result of the program, most young offenders have school placements and those leaving custody return to their home schools with support services in place. This program has successfully reduced the number of youth who re-offend or receive a custody disposition.

Also in 2001-02, the Department worked with Saskatchewan Justice and the Regina Police Service to develop an integrated strategy to combat car theft in Regina. The new strategy, announced on January 31, 2002, includes:

- The development of a specific alternative measures program targeting first time offenders involved in auto theft;
- A public education program;
- Coordinated supervision of repeat offenders in the community by police and youth workers; and,
- The development of an intensive treatment program targeted to individuals designated as chronic repeat offenders.

While it is too early to declare the strategy a success, early results showed about a 30 per cent decrease in auto thefts by March 31, 2002.

Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues

The role of the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues is to provide the Minister Responsible for Disability Issues with an ongoing consumer voice, and to advise the Government on issues affecting individuals with disabilities. Council members are appointed by the Minister and bring a wide range of non-partisan views and experience with disability issues, ensuring that the Minister hears the widest possible perspective.

Disability Action Plan

On June 28, 2001, the Saskatchewan Council on Disability Issues publicly released its Disability Action Plan. The Disability Action Plan emphasizes full citizenship, self-determination and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the social, economic and cultural life of our province. It identifies seven action areas that will assist in the achievement of these goals:

- ***Awareness and Understanding*** — public education and awareness of disability issues, development and use of a Disability Inclusion Lens by the Government.
- ***Safety and Security*** — responses to abuse and neglect of persons with disabilities and supports for assisted and substitute decision-making.
- ***Disability Supports*** — Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living (SAIL) Program, home care, self-managed care, respite services, transportation, supports to families, housing.
- ***Health*** — early intervention services, rehabilitation services (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy), mental health services.
- ***Education*** — disability supports for K-12 and post-secondary students, independent appeal

process for K-12 system, disability sensitive student loan policy.

- ***Employment*** — employment equity, supports to help persons with disabilities enter and remain in the workforce.
- ***Income Support*** — separating disability supports from basic income support, taxation initiatives.

Disability Supports Research Project

In 2001-02, The Office of Disability Issues (ODI) and the Department of Social Services initiated a research project to better understand the barriers persons with disabilities on SAP experience when trying to enter the labour market, and how these barriers can be addressed. Prairie Research Associates of Winnipeg was contracted to conduct the research, which will:

- Identify characteristics and backgrounds of persons with disabilities on social assistance;
- Determine if, and to what extent, current non-participation in the labour force is a result of disability;
- Identify interventions/supports to respond to disability related and non-disability related barriers; and,
- Determine employer concerns and need for supports in hiring persons with disabilites.

Results of this research will help determine how supports for persons with disabilities can be more effectively delivered to help individuals gain and maintain attachment to the labour force. As well, it will guide the Department and the Government in developing options for delivering disability programs and services outside of social assistance that support employment access and

(Photo). Permission from Health Canada, 2002

Goal 2: People in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances are included and supported in their families and communities.

integration into the mainstream.

The Department's strategic plan is based on the principles of inclusion and citizenship. These principles are best served by providing strong supports that help disadvantaged people remain within their families and their communities.

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are key service delivery partners for the Department. In 2001, the Department held broad-ranging consultations with the CBO sector to identify opportunities for building community capacities. Although funding for CBOs will continue to be a challenge, there is a strong consensus that community delivery of key services is essential to the overall health of our province.

Building individual, family and community capacity

Child nutrition and development

Under the Child Nutrition and Development Program (CNDP), government and communities work together to reduce the nutritional risks to children from low-income families. Funding is used for food, nutritional education, and family support projects.

In 2001-02, the Department funded 45 projects delivered by community-based organizations, local governments, schools and school divisions across the province. These projects delivered more than 1.7 million meals to children throughout the province and supported families through initiatives such as community kitchens and gardens, as well as other projects to help low-income families gain the knowledge and skills necessary for independence.

Resources for independence

Throughout the year, the Department provided funding to assist community organizations to develop services which contribute to the well-being of low-income people in Saskatchewan. In 2001-02, funding was provided to:

- Unemployed Workers Help and Counselling Centre in Regina to assist workers with claims for alternative income such as Employment Insurance;
- Community Reference Panel pilots established in Fall 2000 in Beauval and Cumberland House to provide an opportunity for greater community input into services and programs in the North;
- Salvation Army in Saskatoon to provide after-hours emergency financial services for the Saskatoon Regional Income Security Office;
- Saskatoon Environmentors Cooperatives Ltd. to provide youth in the inner city with opportunities to engage in creative economic activities based on environmental principles; and,
- Community-based organizations to provide budget counselling and skill development services for social assistance clients.

Family reunification

The number of children in the care of Social Services, and the cost per case, has been steadily increasing for several years. This has been experienced not only in Saskatchewan, but in all other jurisdictions in Canada.

A child in care is a child who cannot be safely cared for by the family or the community. In those circumstances where it has been deemed in the child's best interests and there are clear Child Welfare concerns that prevent the child from remaining at home, there may be no other options available other than out-of-home care. It is in these circumstances that the department has focused more attention on planned family reunification. The components of family reunification include: supporting the family strengths while ensuring children's safety and meeting their developmental needs, comprehensive assessments of the child and family, and integrated case planning.

For families that require more intense involvement, The Family Reunification Program, introduced in December 2000 in the Department's Prince Albert office, is a targeted approach which combines the principles and beliefs of Family Centred Case Management and the Inclusive Foster Care Model to reunite and maintain children with their parents or extended family. When children in out-of-home care cannot be returned home through the usual case interventions and planning, an intensive approach is used which concentrates on supporting the family to prepare for and practice parenting their children over an extended period of time. The reunification process utilizes a phased, time-limited approach which supports gradual reintegration of children into the family home. This process requires a team approach which includes the caseworker, the foster family, extended family, and community supports.

In 2001-02, the Department began developing a framework for evaluation of this program. The framework will examine overall program effectiveness and will provide the Department with a better understanding of how family reunification works and under what conditions it is likely to be successful.

Child assessment and development

In 2001-02, the Department developed and implemented a new Child Assessment and Developmental Plan. This instrument is fully integrated with the Department's Family Centred Case Management approach and promotes healthy child development for children in care. Several key domains are assessed including education, health, family and social relationships with supporting plans for continued development. An automated version of the tool for comprehensive and ongoing analysis of the child in care population was developed and piloted. This represents a major step forward for the department in terms of both practice and quality assurance.

Young offender services

The Youth Services Model being implemented in Saskatchewan focuses on building the skills young people need to become well-functioning, contributing members of society. Alternative measures are those measures that allow young offenders to take responsibility for their actions without being placed in custody. These may include community work, restitution or other means by which the youth is made to recognize the impact of his actions on the community and provided support for change.

For the 2001-02 fiscal year, the Intensive Case Management Program reduced the average daily number of youth in custody by approximately 80 youth. This program provides a community alternative to youth being released from custody and youth at high risk of going to custody by providing intensive services which match the level of risk and need. The Intensive Case Management Program works with other departments and community groups to develop holistic and comprehensive case plans designed to meet the needs of youth in all areas of their lives. Where appropriate, program staff work closely with First Nations communities to address issues around the youth's reintegration, rehabilitation and accountability to ensure the safety of victims and the community at large. In 2001-02, services were provided to an average of 233 youth per day, all of whom were at risk of going to custody without the intensive services provided by the program.

The High Risk Violent Youth Initiative was developed in partnership with the Department of Health and five health districts around the province. The program addresses both the rehabilitation and risk management of violent youth who represent a significant risk to the safety of the community. By targeting these youth, providing intensive interventions and developing effective safety plans, community safety is enhanced and the likelihood that youth will return to custody is reduced.

Victims of domestic violence

During 2001-02, the Department continued to provide funding to community-based organizations to provide counselling, outreach and emergency residential services to victims of domestic violence. This includes ten 24-hour staffed shelters (one of which is co-funded by Indian and Native Affairs Canada), six community-based services for victims of sexual assault, and eight Family Violence outreach

programs. Family Violence outreach services are also delivered by Department staff at the Domestic Abuse Outreach Program located in the Family Support Centre in Saskatoon.

Children and youth exploited through the sex trade

On March 22, 2002, the Government of Saskatchewan introduced a comprehensive strategy aimed at eliminating the sexual abuse of children and youth through the sex trade. The integrated strategy involves the participation of several government departments and responds to recommendations of the Special Committee to Prevent the Abuse and Exploitation of Children Through the Sex Trade.

This Committee held hearings in 11 communities over 18 months and heard from nearly 200 witnesses. The committee tabled its final report and recommendations in the Legislature in June of 2001.

The Department of Social Services played a significant role in development of the strategy, and will continue to be a key department in its implementation. The Department's involvement in the strategy includes:

- Introduction of *The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act*, which allows police, social workers and outreach workers to obtain Emergency Intervention Orders to keep offenders away from young victims, and expands police power to search vehicles and seize evidence of abuse found in those vehicles;
- The establishment of Regional Intervention Committees to support and coordinate services for these children and youth as they struggle to exit the street;
- Creation of a safe house in Regina during the 2002-03 fiscal year to be operated by First Nations;
- Prioritization of 26 spaces in the Department's continuum of residential care facilities; and,
- Designation of social workers in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert to facilitate investigations of sexual exploitation of children and youth.

Teen and young parent services

The province-wide Teen and Young Parent Program offers counselling and support services to young parents and teens facing an unintentional pregnancy. During 2001-02, about 400 teen and young parents received services through Department staff. Additional services, including lifeskills and parenting groups, were provided through staff and community-based organizations.

Adoptions

The Department is responsible for reviewing materials for all adoptions finalized in Saskatchewan 30 days prior to submission to court. This includes ward, independent, agency, step-parent and some intercountry adoptions where the order is granted in Saskatchewan. In 2001-02, there were 193 adoptions finalized, as follows:

Ward adoption	39
Step-parent adoption	109
Independent adoption	24
Intercountry adoption	12
Agency adoption	9

The Post Adoption Registry program completed 184 background histories and 149 searches and reunions as well as other various services.

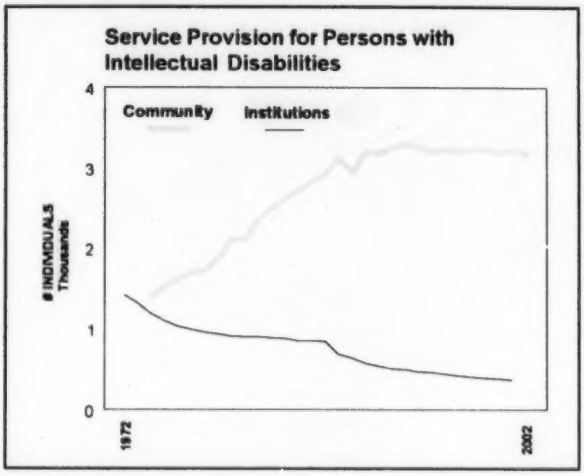
Services for people with intellectual disabilities and special needs

Over the past two decades, the Department has tried to move as many people with intellectual disabilities as possible out of institutions and into the community, with the appropriate support.

The Department continues to provide important support services to families caring for children with disabilities. These services are designed to:

- help parents and their children through the initial adjustment to disability;
- diminish problems in family functioning caused by a disability;
- help families and the community service system establish a developmental model for preschool and school-aged children; and,

- help families make appropriate decisions about educational, housing and lifestyle issues at key times.



Respite services

Respite services help families by providing short-term residential care to allow for planned breaks or for crisis management. Respite services are provided by resource homes located in Regina and Saskatoon, or in the case of families not having easy access to the resource homes, through the Outreach Program.

The Outreach Program provides funding to offset the cost incurred by a family in accommodating their family member in their own home or other local resource as needed. Respite services in rural areas are provided by a number of group homes, which maintain a space in their facility for this purpose. In 2001-02, the Department made available 5,475 person-days of respite support through the resource homes and more than 25,005 person-days of respite through the Outreach Program.

In keeping with the philosophy of Family Centred Services, the Department also supports families whose children have intensive support needs that cannot be served with existing respite services. In these situations, individualized support plans are developed with the family and facilitated through use of preventive service provisions under *The Child and Family Services Act*. In 2001-02, 192 families received this support.

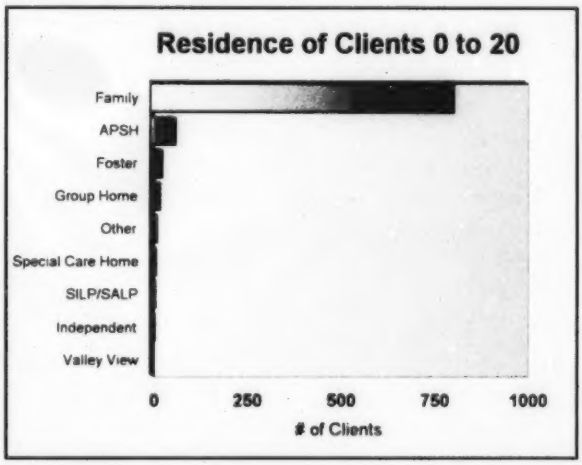
Employment supports

Employment/Transitional Training Services focus on training and production. Participants develop work and life skills until they are able to reach their potential level of independence or obtain competitive employment. A portion of the profit realized by workshops is returned to the participants.

Activity centres are facilities designed for individuals who have limited motor and sensory development. Programming emphasizes basic living skills, socialization, and recreation. Although some activities may be of a productive nature, they are secondary to the primary goal of maximizing an individual's potential in the community setting.

Supported living

Group homes provide accommodation, personal care and individualized program support for up to six people. Most individuals attend organized daytime activity such as provided in schools, sheltered workshops and activity centres. Some of these homes have been developed as group living homes, a modified group home where individuals share a house and are responsible for their own basic shelter costs. The Department provides funds for support staff when required.



Supportive Living Programs provide the necessary supports to enable adults with intellectual disabilities to live in their own homes or apartments. Supported Apartment Living Programs provide an alternative for those who

need more than supportive living but less than the supports of a group home.

Early childhood intervention

Early Childhood Intervention Programs provide home-based training and support to parents of children with developmental disabilities from birth to age five. A provincial council provides a forum to develop standards and discuss new ideas. In 2001-02, the Department provided funding to 16 Early Childhood Intervention Programs.

Advocacy and special resources

The Department funds a variety of provincial organizations that provide advocacy and specialized resource services on behalf of people with disabilities. Initiatives funded in 2001-02 include:

- Interpretive services for people with hearing impairment, provided by the Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services;
- Advocacy efforts conducted by the Saskatchewan Voice of People with Disabilities; and,
- Staff development and quality assurance initiatives for the Saskatchewan Association for Community Living.

Valley View Centre

Valley View Centre in Moose Jaw provides long-term care services for people with intellectual disabilities. As of March 31, 2002, the Centre was home to 367 adults whose needs could not be met within the wider community. Valley View Centre also operates North View Home in Prince Albert, a 12-bed community living resident.

Valley View Centre provides a wide range of services to residents, organized around the values of respect, compassion, teamwork, equality, honesty, humour, and communication. Between June and August of each year, the Centre operates Camp Thunderbird, located at Candle Lake, and provides a camping experience for approximately 400 people with intellectual disabilities.

Admissions to Valley View Centre are limited and all community options are explored before consideration is given to admitting a person to Valley View. In 2001-02, five people were admitted to the Centre and three residents were discharged.

In 2001-02, Valley View Centre:

- completed a five-year strategic plan;
- formally participated on the Moose Jaw Thunder Creek Health District Ethics Committee;
- developed an information booklet about the Centre;
- reviewed and revised the process for resident care planning;
- utilized 24-hour Emergency Medical Services with the local health district; and,

- conducted an assessment of staff training needs.

Engaging the public in issues, strategies and solutions

The Department's strategic plan is informed by past experience in its programs, and on discussions with staff and stakeholders. The plan will continue to evolve as we engage in discussions about issues, and as we learn from observations and experience in implementing changes.

The Department considers broad public support to be critical to the achievement of its strategic goals and objectives. We believe that the direction we are taking and the outcomes we hope to achieve reflect the values of Saskatchewan people. We are committed to continuing our consultations with stakeholders, clients and the public, and to providing regular reports on our progress.

In 2001-02, the Department initiated and/or continued a number of consultation processes, as follows:

- The Department met with the range of stakeholders involved in alternative measures services for young offenders across the province to review issues including capacity, stakeholder satisfaction and program standards.
- An extensive survey of child care needs and preferences of Saskatchewan parents, and the role of government in supporting those needs, was commissioned, and the results were presented to the Department of Social Services in December 2001.
- The Child Welfare Redesign Reference Committee, established in 2000 to facilitate input and advice on Child Welfare redesign, meets semi-annually. The Committee represents a broad spectrum of government departments and external agencies involved in children's issues, as well as client representatives. Members provide input from their area of expertise and serve as a communication link with the agency or organization they represent.
- The Department of Social Services is a signator to a three-way partnership agreement between the Department, Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres and Saskatchewan Association for Community Living. These partners have agreed to work together on strategic planning, specific new programs and projects, increased communication, and development of new partnerships between other agencies and organizations.
- Stakeholders representing people with intellectual disabilities were engaged to begin development of an assessment process to provide access to funding, based on supports provided in Activity Centres and Sheltered Workshops to mitigate the impact of disability.
- The Department entered into an agreement with the Saskatoon Anti-Poverty Coalition on a collaborative process focusing on the issue of poverty. The project represents a new model in community consultation within the larger context of provincial stakeholder consultations.
- The Department undertook broad-ranging consultations with businesses, community-based organizations and other groups across the province to obtain further input on the Building Independence initiative. The consultation included province-wide distribution of a public survey regarding phase 2 on Building Independence.
- The Department reported on barriers to employment experienced by people on social assistance. "Monitoring the Effects of Family Health Benefits for Low-Income Families in Saskatchewan", undertaken in partnership with Saskatchewan Health, shows how new health benefits are used by families. The Family Health Benefits Program is one of the Building Independence programs.
- The Department consulted widely with representatives of community organizations across the province. The discussions provided people with an opportunity to become aware of the Department's strategic plan and discuss its implications for their work.

- ***Goal 3: Effective policy, programs, services and systems support citizenship and inclusion of people in marginalized or disadvantaged circumstances.***

Saskatchewan Social Services continues to redesign services to more effectively support our vision of inclusion and participation for all Saskatchewan people. Ongoing efforts are required to ensure consistent and effective implementation of these new approaches.

The Department is committed to developing, implementing and continually evaluating the effectiveness of programs that result in positive outcomes for Saskatchewan people. We are also committed to ensuring effective financial controls on the use of public money.

Improving accountability mechanisms

The Department has agreements with five northern First Nations (Peter Ballantyne, La Ronge, Montreal Lake, Black Lake, and Hatchet Lake) for the delivery of social assistance to off-reserve Band members in adjacent communities. The Department conducts audits of cases administered by the Bands to ensure assistance is provided in accordance with Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP) Regulations and policies, and provides ongoing support and training to Band staff regarding SAP program policies and regulations.

- The 2001-02 random case audit revealed a Saskatchewan Assistance Plan error rate of 3.5 per cent which continues to be below the acceptable error limit of four per cent established in consultation with the Provincial Auditor.

The Department has mechanisms in place to allow citizens to appeal decisions concerning their eligibility for or amount of social assistance. Following a request, in writing, appeals are first heard by a Local Appeal Committee made up of local citizens. If the appellant is still not satisfied, he or she may bring the case to the Provincial Social Services Appeal Board whose members are also independent citizens. The decision of the Provincial Appeal Board is final.

- In 2001-02, 416 appeals were heard by the Local Appeal Committee which upheld the Department's decision in 368 cases. The Provincial Appeal Board heard 117 appeals and upheld the Department's decision in 94 cases.

A separate appeal process exists for income-tested programs such as the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement. An individual may make a request for an appeal to the program manager and, if not satisfied, may appeal to an adjudicator. The adjudicator's decision must be made within 20 days and is final.

- In 2001-02, 63 appeals were registered, with four proceeding to the adjudicator. The decision of the Department was upheld in all four cases.

The Department and the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association have committed to a joint work plan through which issues of common concern are addressed. Joint committees met regularly throughout 2001-02 to address a range of issues.

Also in 2001-02:

- The Department, in partnership with Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, and Saskatchewan Association for Community Living, implemented the Saskatchewan Basic Standards to ensure the existence or development of a policy framework to provide accountability in the community-based organization sector.
- Internal supervisory training was provided in several program areas, including:
  - the principles of recruitment and selection of staff;
  - probationary ratings;
  - coaching;
  - Performance Improvement Plans; and,
  - corrective discipline.

- Various team-building workshops were held with staff affected by the Department's redesign initiatives.
- The Department conducted surveys of participants in Jobs First and First Step pilot programs in Regina and Yorkton. The surveys were designed to get the opinions of participants about the usefulness of the programs, as well as any suggestions for change.
- Three-month and eight-month reviews of the social assistance redesign pilot projects were undertaken to provide information on the operation of the pilot sites and their effectiveness in meeting the needs of clients.
- A socio-demographic scan of the province was part of the budgeting process to ensure that Department planning continues to address social pressures that may arise in the future.
- The alternative measures program for youth was reviewed to measure the extent to which young offenders were diverted from the formal Youth Court system to other methods of holding them accountable for their offending behaviour.

Improving human resource, information technology and capital planning and implementation

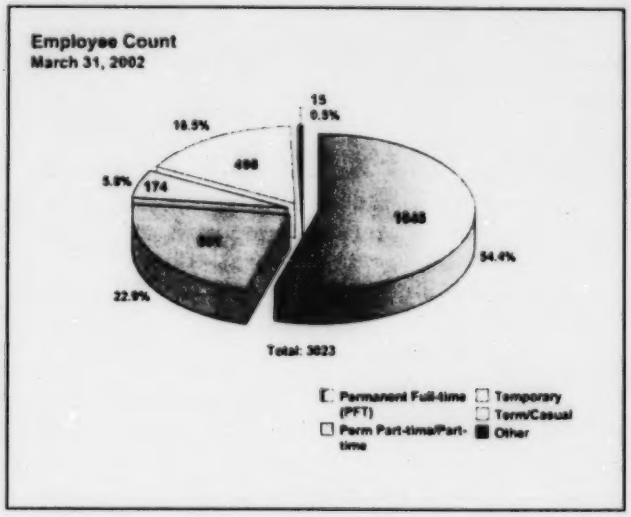
In terms of employees, Saskatchewan Social Services is the largest government department in Saskatchewan. The success of the Department in meeting its goals relies heavily on its ability to ensure that adequate human, technological and capital resources are in place.

Changes in our strategic direction, in the services we delivery and in they way we deliver them require a new approach to planning for the future of our organization. Over the next year, the Department will undertake significant planning work to chart a course for physical infrastructure renewal, improved technology systems and more effective human resource planning and development.

Human resources

The Department is engaged in the development of a corporate human resource plan that will support the strategic goals of the Department. This developmental process includes:

- preparing information regarding workforce demographics and providing this information to various managers in order to develop a better understanding of the current make-up of the Department's workforce and identification of issues related to the current workforce;
- conducting workforce consultations with newer employees to gain a better understanding of their employment motivations;
- reviewing staffing processes and identifying issues with these processes including the use of term employees; and,
- beginning work on a succession plan for the Department.



The Department is constantly involved in training and retraining staff as progress is made in redesigning programs and services. In 2001-02:

- The Income Security Division provided 300 training opportunities to Department staff and personnel from collateral and community-based agencies through its core training program. Training was provided on such topics as social assistance policy and procedures, case management, communication and interviewing skills, understanding poverty, the dynamics of family violence and child abuse, the impact of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, cultural awareness, and other topics relevant to new and veteran program staff. Additional training was provided to audit and verification staff to ensure the continued integrity of essential program accountability functions.
- Between May and December, 2001, more than 600 staff, ranging from Income Security field staff to Central Office managers from all divisions, received orientation and training regarding the Transition Planning Model.
- The Provincial Training Committee provided training activities and events related to crisis intervention, supervisory training for front-line managers, person-centred planning support models, bursaries for participants in job coach courses at the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, and sensory motor integration for early childhood service providers. The purpose of the Provincial Training Committee is to oversee both the immediate and long-term provincial training needs of those who serve persons with intellectual disabilities.
- The Family and Youth Services Division continued to train Department and First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) personnel in Family Centred Case Practice. Over the course of the year, 920 Department staff and 118 FNCFS employees participated in one or more training sessions covering legal issues, supervision, assessment and case planning, children's services, preparation for practice and child welfare.
- Practice reviews of all open child protection files were undertaken in the Northwest and Northeast regions. The reviews covered issues ranging from the supervision of protection files to risk assessment and application of practice standards. Upon completion, a detailed analysis was provided to regional management for follow-up.

In 2001-02, the Department also conducted a feasibility study to clarify understanding of the labour market demand for social workers. Results of the study will assist the Department to meet the upcoming need for social workers in the province.

Information technology

In 2001-02, a number of projects were undertaken to ensure appropriate technology support for Department programs and services, including:

- Initial development of an Enterprise IT Architecture to provide a framework to guide IT investment and design decisions;
- Implementation of the Contact Management System to schedule and track clients through Jobs First and First Step sessions;
- Development of a Lotus Notes "Application for Benefits" form and database to record and track call information in the SAP Call Centre;
- Enhancements to the Social Worker Information Network (SWIN) to deliver short-term benefits to clients participating in Jobs First and First Step sessions; and,
- Replacement of more than 100 486-based computers to enable staff to access Redesign-related computer software applications.

Information security

In 2001-02 the Department developed the next phase in its program to further enhance compliance with *The Freedom of Information Act* and the pending Health Information Privacy legislation.

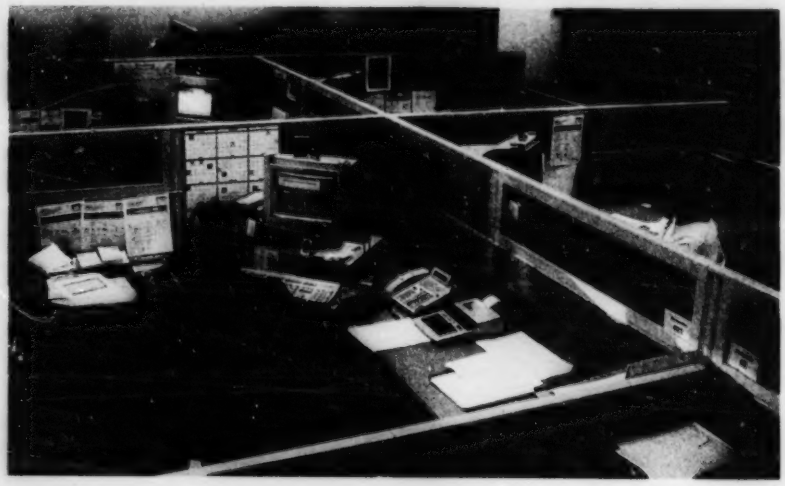
Security controls were implemented, further limiting the access by Social Services staff to those with a business need.

Similar enhancements were implemented on internal SWIN information to track access.

Capital planning

The Department's 2001-02 capital budget of $900,000 was expended on:

- Major office renovations to the Sturdy Stone building in Saskatoon;
- Numerous smaller central and regional projects to accommodate additional staff;
- An extensive study to investigate future expansion options at Prince Albert Youth Residence;
- Major repairs to the foundation and replacement of the gym floor at Kilburn Hall;
- Major repairs and minor renovation to North Battleford Youth Centre classrooms;
- Improvements to numerous facilities and group homes including Echo Valley Youth Camp, Dales House, Paul Dojack Youth Centre, and the Prince Albert Treatment Group Home; and,
- Various expenditures relating to the construction of the new Drumming Hill Open Custody facility on the grounds of the North Battleford Hospital (completed in September 2001).



Future Challenges and Opportunities

On March 26, 2002, the Government of Saskatchewan announced a major reorganization to government departments and agencies. As a result of the reorganization, two significant changes occurred within Social Services:

- Responsibility for young offenders was transferred to the new Department of Corrections and Public Safety; and,
- Social Services assumed responsibility for Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and Canada-Saskatchewan Career and Employment Services.

A major restructuring such as this brings with it many challenges, particularly in administrative functions such as organizational development, technology, financial management and capital planning. As well, both Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and Career and Employment Services have an existing regional structure, which differs from the regional layout of the traditional Social Services department. Over the next year, the Department will work diligently to ensure a smooth transition for employees and an appropriate integration of management functions and delivery systems. The Department will also work closely with Corrections and Public Safety to ensure a continued focus on the Youth Services Model for young offenders.

Along with these challenges comes tremendous opportunity. In addition to expanding our capacity by adding the functions both services provide, the reorganization brings to nearly 1,000 the number of community-based organizations with whom we work. Equally important, it affords a tremendous opportunity to develop new approaches, partnerships and solutions that will help us realize our goal of supporting Saskatchewan families to become independent.

The Social Services vision statement focuses on supporting individuals and families to "be included, to contribute and to participate equitably in the social, economic and cultural life of the province." The reorganization provides more tools and broader opportunities for the Department to address our strategic goals by bringing together similar programs, services and clients. There is clearly a continuum of needs that can be served by coordinating efforts among these three areas.

While the Department has made major progress towards achieving our goals, we recognize that more can be done. Major thrusts in the year ahead will include:

- Supporting labour market attachment through enhancements to the Building Independence programs and child day care;
- Negotiating the terms of a significant affordable housing agreement with the federal government;
- Enhancing support for community based organizations;
- Investing in critical supports for high-risk children and families through participation in KidsFirst and other initiatives;
- Providing greater resources to support people with disabilities to become and remain independent; and,
- Ensuring everyone involved is knowledgeable about the multitude of programs and services available to our client groups.

Appendices

Legislation

The 12 provincial Acts administered by the Department for the fiscal year under review are:

- *The Adoption Act*
- *The Child and Family Services Act*
- *The Child Care Act*
- *The Donation of Food Act, 1995*
- *The Department of Social Services Act*
- *The Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Implementation Act*
- *The Registered Social Workers Act*
- *The Rehabilitation Act*
- *The Residential Services Act (dual authority with the Department of Health)*
- *The Saskatchewan Assistance Act*
- *The Saskatchewan Income Plan Act*
- *The Young Offenders' Services Act*

The Department also administered many regulations under the above legislation, as well as portions of the federal *Young Offenders Act*.

Publications

The Department of Social Services produces the following publications:

Factsheets

- Intercountry Adoption
- Adoption
- Teen and Young Parent Program
- Post Adoption Services
- The Family Child Care Home Program
- Information for the Provider
- Information for the Parents
- Guide to Developing a Child Day Care Centre
- Child Day Care Subsidies
- Quality Care . . . It all adds up!
- Community Living Division
- Valley View Centre
- Approved Private-service Home Program
- The Provincial Partnership
- Foster Families - Caring for Saskatchewan Children
- Child Protection Services
- Your Right to Appeal
- Therapeutic Foster Care Program
- Information for Youth in Care
- Services to 16 and 17 Year Olds
- Security (Damage) Deposits and Rent Payments
- Social Assistance - Your Right to Appeal
- Social Assistance Rates
- Social Assistance Handbook
- Social Assistance and Accountability
- Saskatchewan's Council on Children
- What is the Action Plan for Children?
- Policy Framework of the Action Plan for Children
- Valuing Our Children

Note: During 2001-02, numerous factsheets pertaining to young offenders were produced. These have been transferred to the Corrections and Public Safety Department.

Reports

- A Child Should Know: Review of Rights and Responsibilities for Children and Youth (2001)
- Saskatchewan's Action Plan For Children: Progress Report (2001)
- Saskatchewan's Action Plan For Children: Four Years Later (1997)
- Building on Community Success: Creating a Long-Term Plan for Saskatchewan's Youngest Children and Their Families (1999)

Child Day Care Branch Newsletter — Partnerships for Inclusion

- Partnerships with Parents and Professionals (Spring 2002)
- Toys! Toys! Toys! (Winter 2002)
- Children with Challenging Behaviours (Fall 2001)
- Communication Disorders
- Child Care — A Work of Love
- Inclusion Program Information: *Adapted Equipment Grant Information; Enhanced Accessibility Grant Information; Training and Resources Grant Information*

All of the information above and related web links can be found on our web site at: ***www.gov.sk.ca/socserv.***

Organization

The Department's organizational structure during the fiscal year under review is as follows:

Regina Region
Regional Director -
Dave Hedlund

Southeast Region
Regional Director -
John Anderson

Southwest Region
Regional Director -
Rhonda Cossette

Northwest Region
Regional Director -
Ruth Seime

Northeast Region
Regional Director -
Gail Hartsook

Saskatoon Region
Regional Director -
Ron Pollock

Community Living
Executive Director -
Larry Moffatt

- Therapy Support
- Family Support
- Community Based Service Delivery
- Early Childhood Intervention Services
- Direct Residential Services - Valley View Centre (Moose Jaw)

Intergovernmental Relations
Executive Director -
Don Fairbairn

Organizational Development
Executive Director -
Heather Thurmeier

Strategic Policy
Executive Director -
Rick August

Financial Management
Executive Director -
Don Allen

Communications and Public Education
Director - Sandra Lodoen

Information & Technology Services
Director - Richard Deutscher

Property Management
Director - Del Fuchs

Office of Disability Issues
Executive Coordinator -
Daryl Stubel

Family and Youth
Executive Director -
Richard Hazel

- Child Protection
- Alternative Care for Children
- Adoption
- Teen and Young Parent Services
- Parenting Education
- Young Offender Services

Community Development
A/Director - Paul Wilkinson

Income Security
Executive Director - Phil Walsh

- Saskatchewan Assistance Plan
- Saskatchewan Income Plan
- Saskatchewan Employment Supplement
- Saskatchewan Child Benefit
- Child Nutrition and Development Program
- Child Day Care
- Emergency Social Services

Research and Evaluation
Director - David Rosenbluth

Financial Schedules

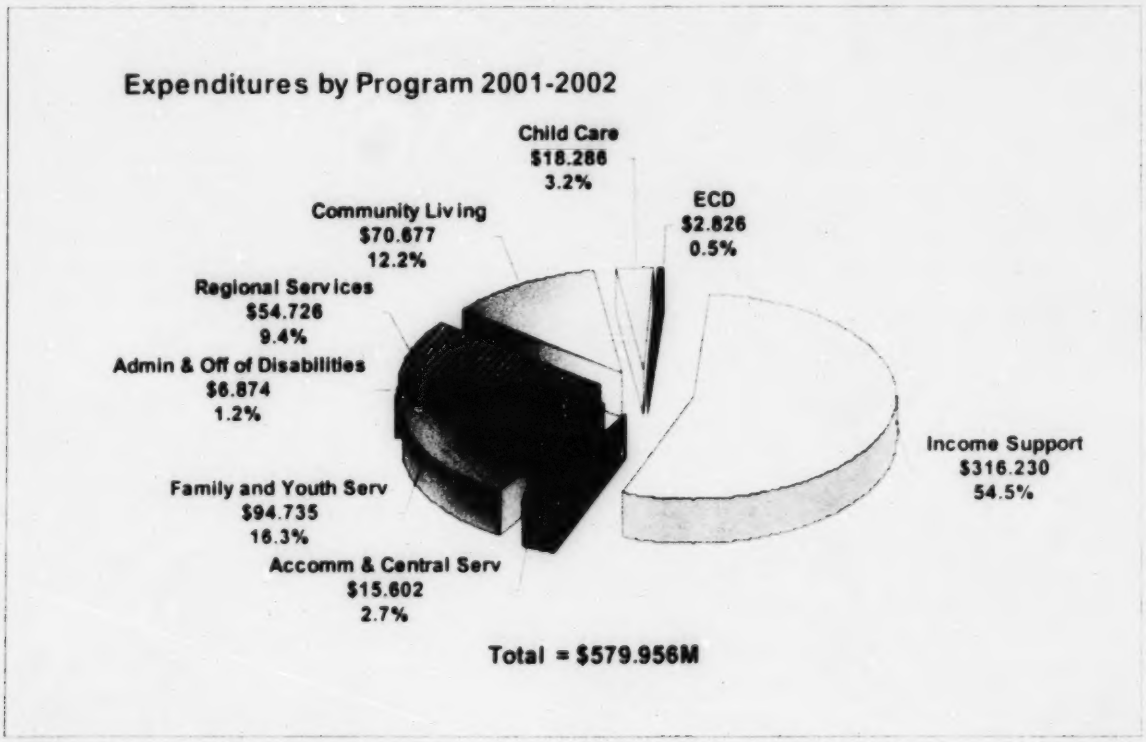
Expenditure Statement 2001-2002

		2000-2001	2001-2002			
		Actual ($000's)	Approved Budget ($000's)	Actual ($000's)	Variance Actual to Actual ($000's)	Notes
SS01	**Administration**	**7,292**	**7,320**	**6,661**	**(659)**	*1*
SS02	**Accommodation & Central Services**					
	0057 Payments to SPMC	13,849	15,312	15,602	290	
	Total Accommodation & Central Services	**13,849**	**15,312**	**15,602**	**290**	*2*
SS03	**Income Support**					
	0004 Saskatchewan Assistance Plan	255,038	254,520	251,849	(2,671)	
	0008 Saskatchewan Income Plan	10,924	10,000	10,076	76	
	0012 Saskatchewan Child Benefit	46,804	32,000	27,706	(4,294)	
	0013 Saskatchewan Employment Supplement	11,541	16,900	16,567	(333)	
	0029 Income Security Administration	7,650	7,849	8,030	181	
	0033 Community-Based Income Security Programs	1,968	2,476	2,002	(474)	
	Total Income Support	**333,925**	**323,745**	**316,230**	**(7,515)**	*3*
SS04	**Family & Youth Services**					
	0005 Family & Youth Community Services	38,898	39,718	41,923	2,205	
	0010 Family & Youth CBO Services	18,302	20,698	18,938	(1,760)	
	0011 Family & Youth Administration	3,286	3,419	3,511	92	
	0056 Facilities for Children & Youth	29,898	31,563	30,363	(1,200)	
	Total Family & Youth Services	**90,384**	**95,398**	**94,735**	**(663)**	*4*
SS05	**Regional Service Centres**	**50,615**	**55,711**	**54,726**	**(985)**	*5*
SS06	**Community Living**					
	0024 Program Delivery	22,148	23,377	24,415	1,038	
	0027 Payments and Grants	42,115	45,929	46,262	333	
	Total Community Living	**64,263**	**69,306**	**70,677**	**1,371**	*6*
SS07	**Child Care**					
	0018 Child Care Facilities	6,482	6,789	6,845	56	
	0041 Child Care Parent Subsidies	9,850	10,235	9,658	(577)	
	0051 Child Care Administration	1,678	1,568	1,783	215	
	Total Child Care	**18,010**	**18,592**	**18,286**	**(306)**	*7*
SS09	**Office of Disability Issues**	**236**	**219**	**213**	**(6)**	
SS10	**Early Childhood Development**	**0**	**2,889**	**2,826**	**(63)**	
Total Social Services Expenditure		**578,574**	**588,492**	**579,956**	**(8,536)**	

(See following page for notes.)

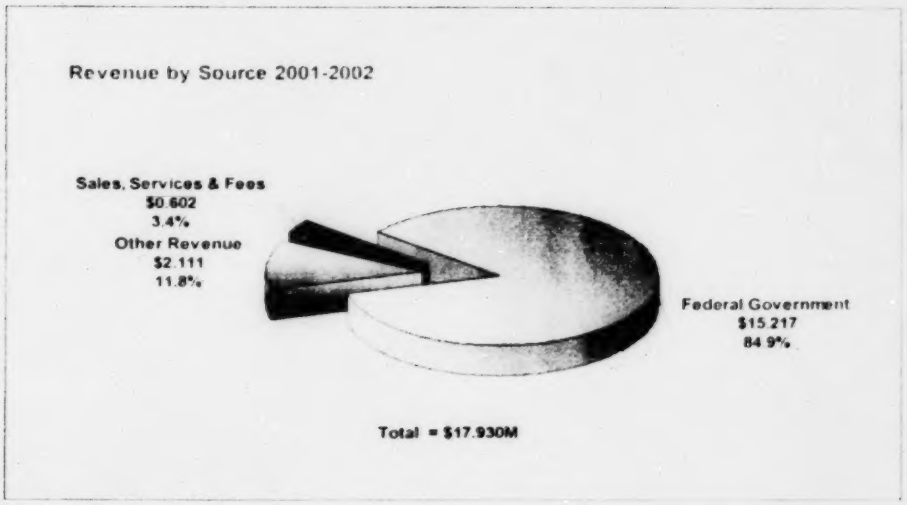
Notes

1. *Reduction in discretionary spending.*
2. *Increase in department space, including Drumming Hill Youth Centre, normal lease increases and increased utility costs.*
3. *SAP decreased due to reduced caseloads, partially offset by utility rate increases. Lower SIP caseload due to higher incomes among seniors. SCB reduction due to offsetting federal investment in NCBS. SES caseload increase.*
4. *Increased program activity in family support and private treatment. Increased costs to develop services within the community. Administrative increase to support redesign of programs. Increased operating costs with facilities for children and youth.*
5. *54 new caseworkers and support workers, increased costs due to new SGEU Collective Bargaining Agreement, increased operating costs.*
6. *CBO salary increases, new programs to respond to caseload pressures, new CUPE Collective Bargaining Agreement, CUPE Class Plan Retro.*
7. *Delays in implementing new funding formula and delays in uptake of parent subsidy.*



Revenue Statement 2001-2002

Sales, Services and Service Fees	2000-2001 Actual ($000's)	2001-2002 Actual ($000's)
- Miscellaneous Medical and Institutional Services	662	491
- Other Miscellaneous Services	52	49
- Miscellaneous Deductions from Staff Salaries	61	62
Total Sales, Services and Service Fees	**775**	**602**
Receipts from Government of Canada		
- Federal-Provincial cost sharing agreements	94	12
- Employability Assistance	1,326	468
- Young Offenders Agreement	7,136	8,457
- Special Allowance for Children in Care	3,421	3,857
- Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	1,454	2,423
- Other Federal Contributions	0	0
Total Receipts from Government of Canada	**13,431**	**15,217**
Other Revenue		
- Maintenance Order Revenues	1,089	1,049
- Casual Revenue	9	104
- Unemployment Insurance Assignment Revenue	91	43
- Repayment — Public Assistance	756	751
- Refunds of Previous years' Expenditures	351	357
- Collection Agency Fees Withheld	(59)	(193)
Total Other Revenue	**2,237**	**2,111**
Total Social Services Revenue	**16,443**	**17,930**



Tangible Capital Assets

Property and Equipment	Cost	Mar. 31, 2002 Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value	Cost	Mar. 31, 2001 Accumulated Amortization	Net Book Value
Vehicles	0	0	0	0	0	0
Machinery and equipment	1,600,425	733,432	866,993	1,370,567	632,985	737,582
Computer hardware	1,825,787	1,191,497	634,290	1,179,504	582,902	596,602
Computer software	294,866	196,578	98,288	636,320	325,925	310,395
Office equipment	147,658	114,873	32,785	144,631	85,341	59,290
Office furniture	1,611,081	511,599	1,099,482	1,223,409	354,932	868,477
Total	**$5,479,817**	**$2,747,979**	**$2,731,838**	**$4,554,431**	**$1,982,085**	**$2,572,346**

Service Centres

Buffalo Narrows 1-800-667-7685
Waite Street 235-1700
Box 220
S0M 0J0

Creighton 1-800-532-9580
1st Street East
Box 10
S0P 0A0

Estevan 637-4550
1219 5th Street
S4A 2V6

Fort Qu'Appelle 1-800-667-3260
177 Segwun Ave. S 332-3260
Box 1400
S0G 1S0

Kindersley 463-5470
113 - 2nd Avenue East
Box 1658
S0L 1S0

LaLoche 1-877-371-1131
LaLoche Avenue 822-1711
Box 70
S0M 1G0

LaRonge 1-800-567-4066
1320 LaRonge Avenue 425-4544
Box 359
S0J 1L0

Lloydminster 1-877-367-7707
4815 - 50th Street 825-6410
S9V 0M8

Meadow Lake 1-877-368-8898
U.5, 201-2nd St. W. 236-7500
S9X 1C7

Melfort 1-800-487-8640
107 Crawford St. E. 752-6100
S0E 1A0

Moose Jaw 694-3647
36 Athabasca Street West
S6H 6V2

Nipawin 1-800-487-8594
210-1st Street East 862-1700
S0E 1E0

North Battleford 1-877-993-9911
405-1146 102nd St. 446-7705
S9A 1E9

Prince Albert 1-800-487-8603
800 Central Avenue 953-2345
S6V 6G1

Regina 787-3700
2045 Broad Street
S4P 3V7

Rosetown 882-5400
122 - 2nd Avenue West
Box 38
S0L 2V0

Saskatoon 1-877-884-1687
220 Idywyld Dr. S. 933-5960
S7K 2H6

Swift Current 778-8219
350 Cheadle Street West
S9H 4G3

Weyburn 848-2404
110 Souris Avenue N.E.
S4H 2Z9

Wynyard 554-5450
205 Bosworth St.
Box 219
S0A 4T0

Yorkton 786-1300
72 Smith Street East
S3N 2Y4

Social Services Call Centre: 1-866-221-5200; in Regina, 798-0660
TTY: 1-866-995-0099; in Regina, 787-1065